Fever Dreams

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Fever Dreams

by Hisvoicebrokemyheart

Summary

When Hannibal was sleeping soundly it was bearable. It was when Hannibal dreamed that Will wanted to claw at his ears till they bled.

Notes

Whumptober Day 15: Fever Dreams

Another late posting, it’s slow going — but it’s going.

Hope you enjoy this foray into the beginning of Hannibal and Will in their post-fall life.

See the end of the work for more notes

Hannibal wasn't getting better. When Will got them to the safe house, he thought they were in the clear but he couldn't have been more wrong.

When Hannibal was sleeping soundly it was bearable. Will made sure to check in on him hourly. He'd clean his face with a cool washcloth and leave it to rest on his forehead in a weak attempt to keep his temperature down.

He stripped Hannibal of most of his clothing during the day so he could clean and apply disinfectant to his open wounds in the morning and at night. After his night time routine, just before heading to the floor to curl up on the mattress he'd dragged into the room on the first night, he would cover Hannibal in thick blankets in the hope that his fever would break.

The fever itself wasn't overwhelmingly high. The thermometer he'd found in the first aid kit was pretty consistent in telling him that.

There were short moments, infrequent as they were, where Will could capture Hannibal's attention. At least it felt like he did. He still wasn't responding to Will's soft words and questions, but his eyes would lazily flick around the room and land on him before falling shut once more.

Will liked to think that Hannibal trusted him to have that response — that he knew that Will would do everything in his power to take care of him.

It was when Hannibal dreamed that Will wanted to claw at his ears till they bled. For all his attempts at breaking it, the fever stuck and he'd been unable to truly wake him thus far.

Hannibal would scream — a thing of pure terror. It came at random times in the day, but the worst was at night. He would cry out for his lost sister, his voice sounding so small. Her name would rip Will from his slumber, and he would scramble across the floor to Hannibal's bedside.

On this night, Will spoke to him in dulcet tones, climbing into the bed to rest Hannibal's head in his lap. He carded his fingers through his hair and sat with him into the morning until Hannibal's hazy eyes looked up at him.

There was just enough clarity in his gaze to allow Will to grab onto a shining thread of hope.

"Good morning," Will mused. He watched as Hannibal closed his eyes with purpose and he saw the stretch of a small smile across his lips. It was the clearest reaction he'd gotten since the fall — Will was grateful for it.

Typically Hannibal would fall off to sleep again, but when Will removed himself from underneath him Hannibal turned his head to follow Will as he moved through the room. His fingers twitched at his side.

It was enough to tell Will that he wanted more. So he returned to Hannibal's side and did what he could to gently lift the man into a seated position. Without thinking he pressed his lips to Hannibal's forehead, feeling much less heat in the skin than he had in the past few

days. He pulled away and felt his own face heat under Hannibal's attention when he realized what he'd done. It was no more intimate than cradling his head as he slept, but the recognition of his action had warmth blooming in his chest.

Hannibal kept quiet throughout the day. When Will left the room he would leave the door open behind him, even if he had to return to the room to receive an answer to a question with a head nod. The open doorway seemed to keep both himself and Hannibal at ease.

As the day came to a close, he held a mug full of warm broth for Hannibal to drink through a straw. He was still so weak, but had enough energy to shoot a glare at Will when he tasted the remnants of the aluminum can the soup came from. It was enough to make Will laugh and the heat behind Hannibal's eyes drifted away at the sound.

Will was happy to see that Hannibal stayed up for the entirety of the day, even if he caught him sliding down the bed to sleep just after the sun had set.

It lifted a weight from Will's shoulders to think that things could be turning around for them.

He was wrong. Will shot up out of bed just barely after he fell asleep, waking up to the sound of Hannibal's distress. It was different from the previous night. Before there was pain and loss, now there was agony and fear. It wasn't Mischa that he called out for, it was Will.

Will nearly felt frozen in place where he rose from his own bed. Until recently, it never occurred to him that their relationship could be anything more than fragile, but here was Hannibal at his most vulnerable with Will at the forefront of his mind.

Hannibal's back arched up off the bed, pushing down with his feet. He writhed beneath the blankets and screamed for relief. His jumbled, sleep-addled speech held the emotions of a man who thought he was losing everything.

Will pulled him free from the covers, threw caution to the wind, and wrapped his arms around his chest. He trapped Hannibal's arms at his sides. He pressed himself to Hannibal's back, tucking himself up so close that he could push his nose into the soft hair above the shell of his ear.

Hannibal thrashed in Will's grip, ultimately unable to tear himself free in his fatigue. Will only held him tighter. Hannibal's hands came up to clamp down on Will's arms. Will questioned whether or not his grip would leave the ache of a bruise and welcomed the possibility.

"Hannibal, please."

He couldn't help but beg. He pleaded with Hannibal as he listened to the whistling whine of the breath he couldn't catch.

"Don't go," Hannibal rasped, his first words in days. The abuse of his terror showed in his voice. "Will."

“I haven’t left. I never did.” Will loosened his hold enough for Hannibal to turn to him. He pulled him close all over again and Hannibal buried his face in Will’s neck. He drew in deep, measured breaths trying to pull the very base notes of Will’s scent from the source.

Will pulled him to lay back in the bed once more, Hannibal covered him completely. He coaxed Hannibal away from his refuge and when Hannibal looked down at him his eyes were shining and clear. His stare pierced into the depths of his mind and when Will kissed him, Hannibal melted.

“I’ve only been waiting for you to come back to me.”

End Notes

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